Cardamines in Edinburgh / Lothians
(Bittercresses, Cuckoo-Flowers)

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Refs : Flora of the British Isles ed 3 (Tutin Clapham) p91, Stace New Flora ed 3 p399, Blamey & Fitter ed 2 p92 & 100, Collins Flower Guide ed 1 p192, New Illustrated Flora v1 Butcher p316, Wild Flower Key ed 2 Rose p210.

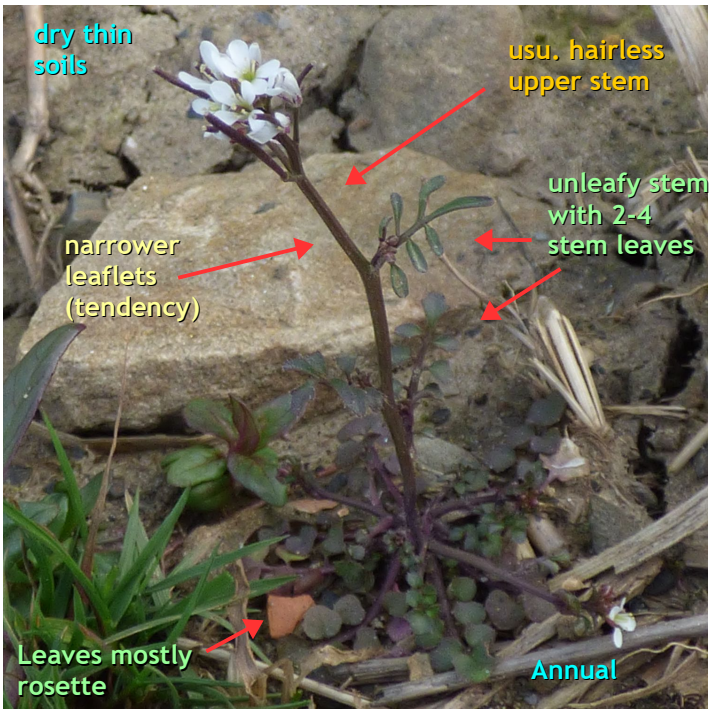
Bittercresses (Hairy, Wavy)

Hairy Bittercress	Wavy Bittercress
Cardamine hirsuta	Cardamine flexuosa
Dry bare ground	Damp, shady spots
Ubiquitous ex. hills - Map & 'Flore Pleno' Map	Ubiquitous (esp west) - Map

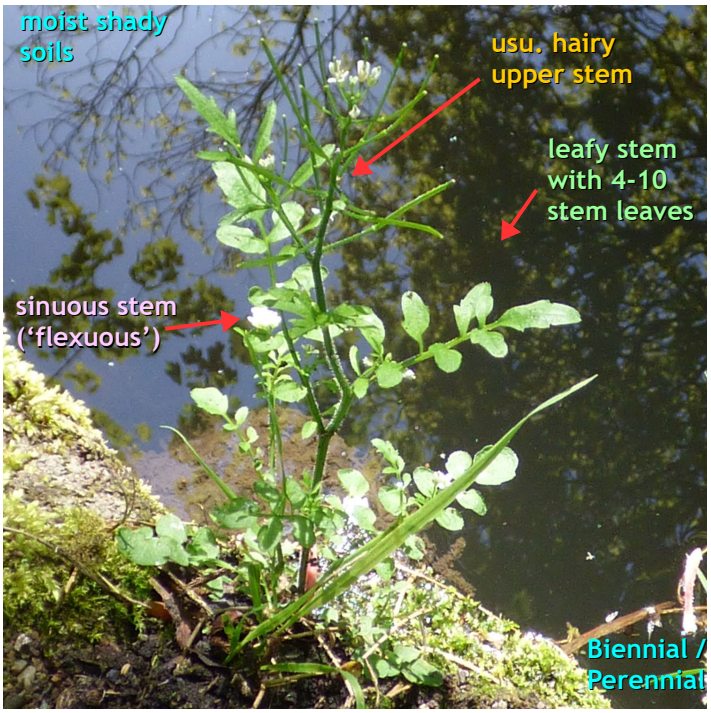
Plant

Bear in mind that a soil that seems dry might actually pool water when it rains and so be wet; the presence of moss etc will often indicate an episodically wet environment.

Hairy



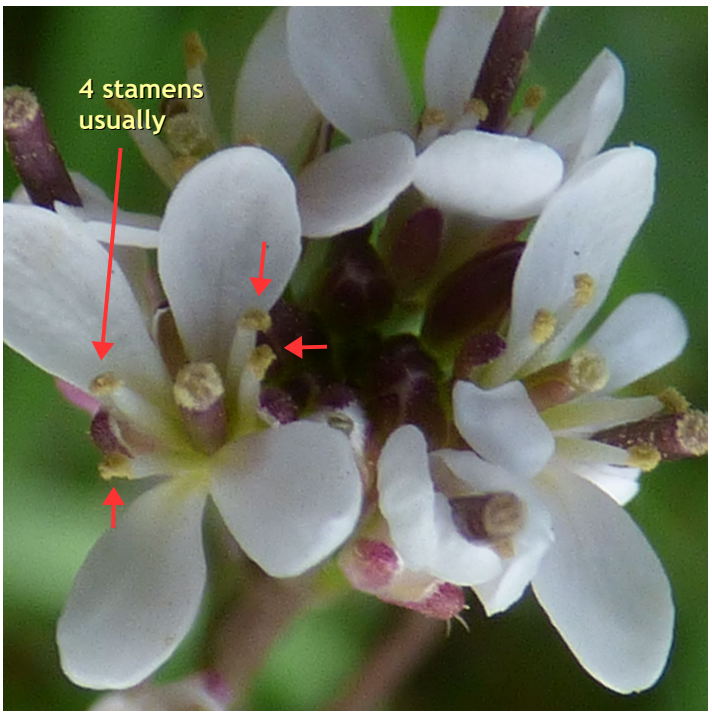
Wavy



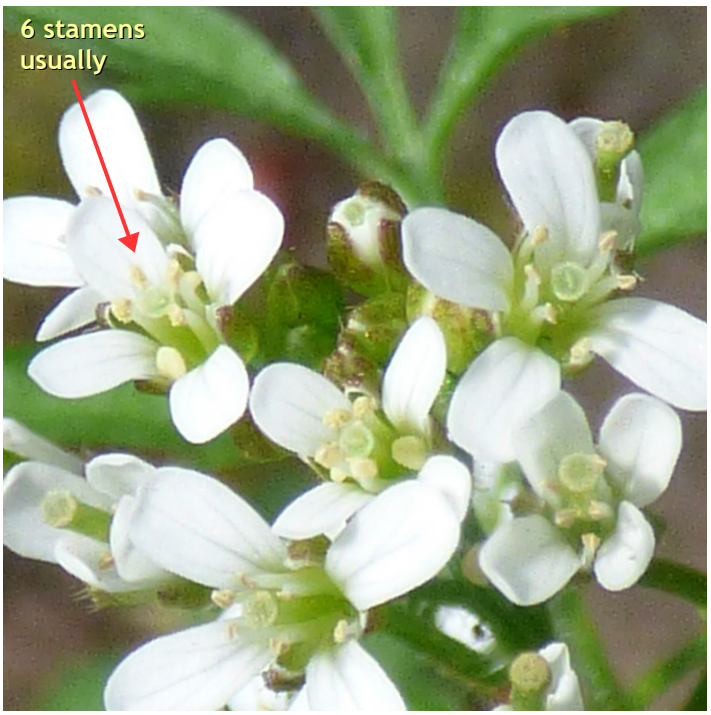
Stamens (key difference!)

• Generally they have 4 and 6 stamens respectively (occasionally 1 out) however check several flowers especially as the 6 may sometimes have some hard to see. If the flower is not open properly, blow into it to open it up. You can use a lens or, if you have a good macro, photograph and zoom in.

Hairy



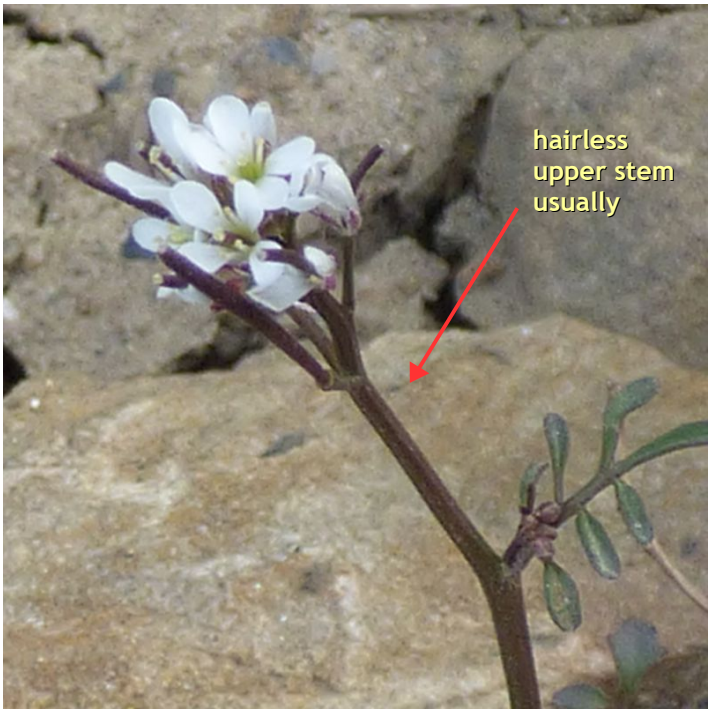
Wavy



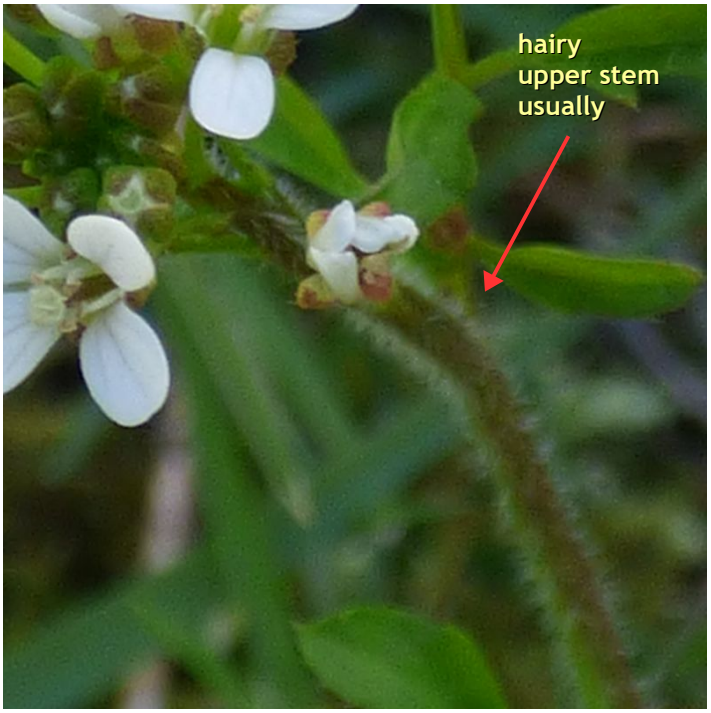
Hairs of Upper Stem

• The upper stem is usually hairless for Hairy and hairy for Wavy, so remember it's the opposite of the name. There's a small amount of variability, so that a sparse hairing will be ambiguous. Wavy is usually pretty hairy in the lower stem and Hairy slightly hairy.

Hairy



Wavy



Pod Length

• There’s a tendency for Hairy to have young pods overtopping the unopened flowers and Wavy not really so, but it’s not hugely reliable or useable.

Hairy	Wavy

Upper Leaf Width

• There’s a tendency for Hairy to have narrower stem leaves and Wavy less so, but again not hugely reliable.

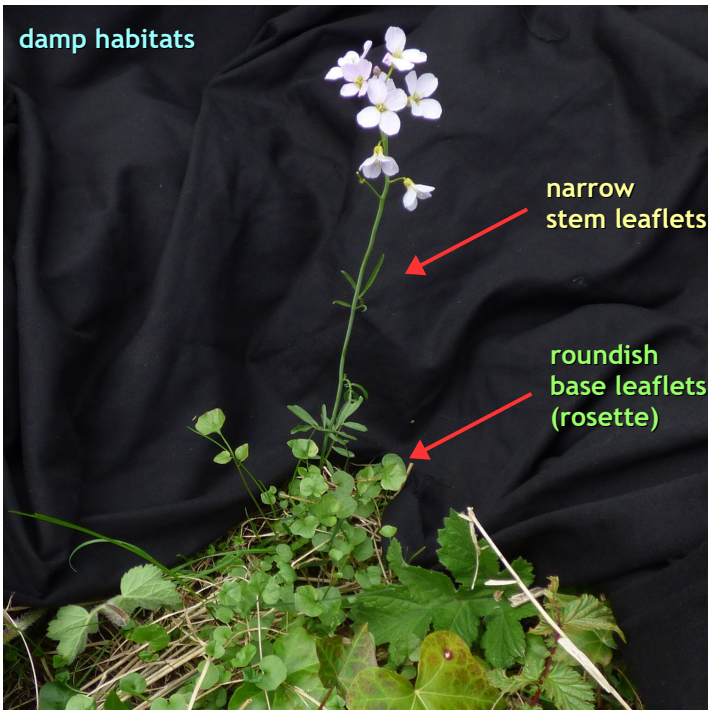
Hairy	Wavy

Cuckoo Flower and Large Bittercress

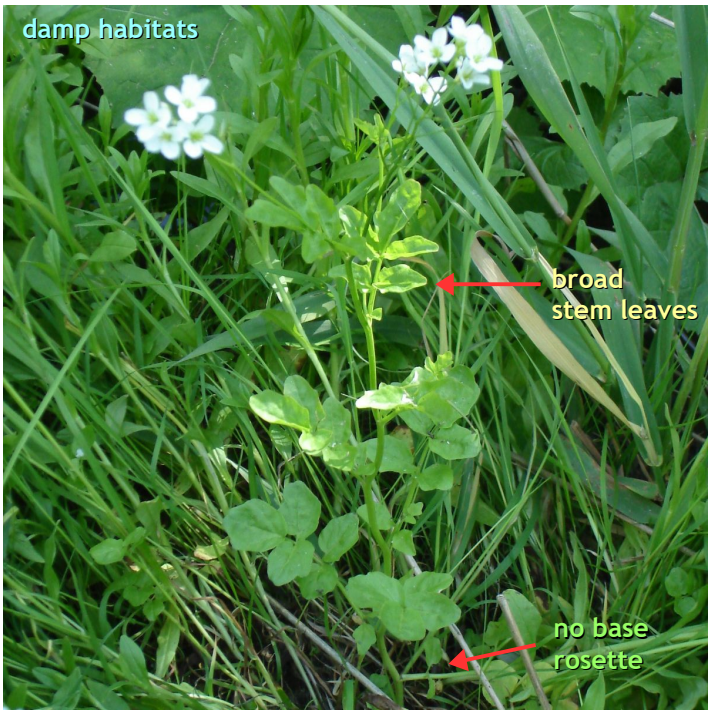
Cuckoo Flower	Large Bittercress
Cardamine pratensis	Cardamine amara
Damp grass, watersides	Watersides
Apr-Jul	Apr-Jun (flowers a few weeks after Cuckoo Flw)
Ubiquitous ex patchily on East nr coast - Map	Patchily outside city (nr watersides etc) - Map

Plant

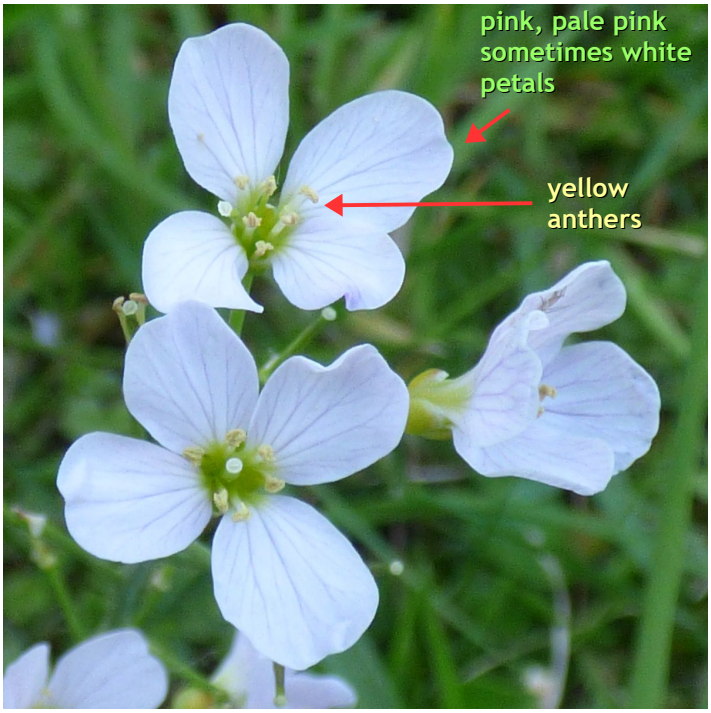
Cuckoo-Flower

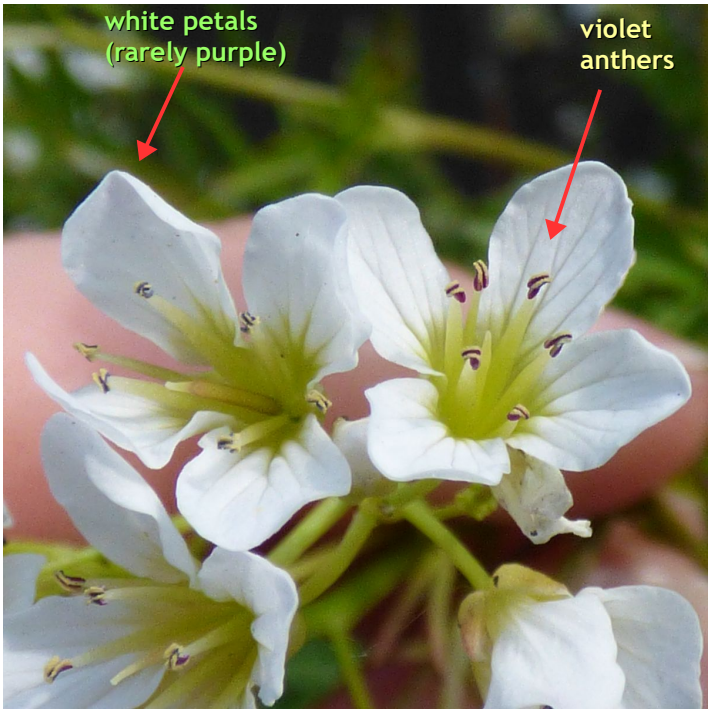


Large Bittercress



Flowers (Anthers)





Lower Leaves

Cuckoo-Flower	Large Bittercress

Undersides

Cuckoo-Flower	Large Bittercress

Area

Cuckoo-Flower	Large Bittercress

Occasional Records

Lothians & Nearby

New Zealand Bitter-cress	Greater Cuckooflower
Cardamine corymbosa	Cardamine raphanifolia
5 recs in City, B&I: scattered - Map	Numerous records Musselburgh-Roslin-Gorebridge, B&I:patchily frequent - Map
Like Wavy Bittercress but broader petals, un- or sparsely hairy, few stem leaves, few leaflets.	A large Cuckooflower with stem leaves large like base ones, end leaflets disproportionately wide.
Image & gallery : southernalpsphotography.com	Image & gallery : floracatalana.net

Narrow-leaved Bitter-cress	
Cardamine impatiens	
1 rec nr Burntisland, B&I: regionally frequent on west - Map	
Image & gallery : michiganflora.net	

Coralroot - Cardamine bulbifera - Lothians:1 rec City, B&I: scattered - Map
Trefoil Cress - Cardamine trifolia - 1 rec Craigmillar, B&I: rare - Map
Five-leaflet Bitter-cress - Cardamine pentaphyllos - 1 rec nr Dollar, B&I: very rare - Map

Britain and Ireland

Cardamine chelidonia - B&I: 1 rec - Map
Cardamine x fringsii - Cardamine flexuosa x pratensis = B&I: scattered Manchester & below - Map
Cardamine x zahlbruckneriana - Cardamine flexuosa x hirsuta = B&I: rare records - Map
Pinnate Coralroot - Cardamine heptaphylla - B&I: rare records - Map
Whorled Coralroot - Cardamine quinquefolia - B&I: very rare - Map

Info

Updated : 2020-04-26b – please check you have the latest version!

Contact : David Merrick – facebook.com/meteorquake

Facebook Botany Group for Lothians : facebook.com/groups/lothiansbotany

All items in this Series : paintdrawer.co.uk/nature/edinburgh/downloads.htm